(b) and (c) Since 1984, 7 LPG distributors of Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation resigned for one or more of the following reasons:

(1) Personal and domestic difficulties.

(2) Avowed uneconomic operation of the distributorship.

(3) As a sequel to warning letters issued by the oil company concerned for various malpractices/ irregularities detected.

Purchase of gas stove at the time of getting new connections

527. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any directive to LPG agencies not to force the consumers to purchase the gas stove from them while giving new gas connections to the consumers;

(b) if so, whether Government have received complaints where the gas agency holders force the consumers to purchase the same at an exhorbitant prices;

(c) whether any such complaint against LPG dealers in Saharanpur have been received by the I.O.C. etc., if so, what action Government have taken against such dealers; and

(d) whether it would not be proper for the IOC to mention this condition in the sanction letter itself so that the LPG dealers may not harass the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) LPG distributors are under instructions from the oil companies not to pressurise the customers to purchase LPG stoves from the distributor concerned at the time of release of new gas connections, since customers have the liberty to purchase the stoves from anywhere as long as these carry ISI certification mark.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Indian Oil Corporation received one written complaint from Saharanpur alleging forced sale of hot plate. However, on investigation it was found that no such complaint exists.

(d) This condition is incorporated in the intimation letter sent to prospective consumers.

Indira Sarovar Hydel Project

528. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a whether it is a fact that the Central Government have not yet cleared the Indira Sarovar Hydel Project to be established at Bastar;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what is the total cost likely to be incurred on this project and by when it is likely to be completed and how much power would be generated according to the present indications?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) and (b) The Indira Sarovar Hydro-electric Project in Madhya Pradesh is an ongoing project and has been sanctioned by the Planning Commission in February, 1979 after techno-economic and environmental clearances. However, the proposal regarding transfer of forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is under consideration.

(c) The Project, estimated to cost Rs 475.8 crores, would have an installed capacity of 500 MW and is targetted for commissioning during 1990-91.

Reserves of coal in Synclinel Axis

529. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that exercise has been carried to find out the possible and probable reserves of 16000 million tonnes of coal in the Synclinel axis from Broach to Mehsana and lignite in Kutch and Broach;

(b) whether it is a fact that further projection of concealed coal in Gujarat upto Kutch was proved when ONGC struck coal beds in oil-well drilling in 1960;

(c) whether in the past and also recently Government have been approached with suggestions or proposals to work out mining of coal and lignite in the above mentioned areas; and

(d) what is the response of Government thereto and details of the information available to Govt. regarding coal and lignite deposits in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (d) Oil and Natural Gas Commission while drilling for oil in Gujarat discovered coal reserves to the tune of 83 billion tonnes in Mehsana-Kalol area at depths varying from 700 to 1700 metres. These deep coal seams are not capable of being mined by conventional mining methods. ONGC have prepared a pilot project as an R&D effort in the field of insitu coal gasification.

As per assessment made by the Geological Survey of India based on regional exploration upto June, 1985, lignite reserves in Gujarat are 152 million tonnes. State Government of Gujarat is engaged in extraction of lignite in Broach and Kutch areas.

Cooking gas connections in Gujarat and in the country

530. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cooking gas connections so far given in Gujarat and other States separately;

(b) what is the projected demand for new gas connections in Gujarat and in the country during this year and in the next year;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that the refurbishing of supply of gas, frequently results in malpractices and corruption; and

(d) how many cases of mal-practices were detected in the last year culminating in the punishment of the person involved and what are the details of the measures taken to prevent this malpractice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) A statement is attached. (*See* below)

(b) As on 1-1-86, the number of persons on the waiting list throughout the country and in the State of Gujarat was 37,05,968 and 5,46,726 respectively.

(c) Complaints of malpractices in the event of delays in supply of LPG refills are received in the normal course of business by the oil marketing companies.

(d) During the year 1985-86, 382 cases of malpractices were detected. Action taken against the erring distributors ranged from issue of caution/warning letters to termination of distributorships.